



THE NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

# Reviewing Stand

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## Are You Looking for a Job— Or a Better Job?

A radio discussion over WGN and the Mutual Broadcasting System

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# Are You Looking for a Job—

## Or a Better Job?

MR. KEATH: Are you looking for a job—or a better job?

MR. BARTLETT: If a young man wants an automobile or wants dates with some girl or a good place to eat and sleep and extra money for vacations—and he hasn't a job—he'd better be looking for one.

MR. BUSBY: It seems to me that a young man just out of high school should make just as thorough an investigation of his prospective employer as his employer will make of him.

MR. ENDICOTT: This question is especially important in the light of the fact that a record number of college graduates will be looking for jobs this month.

\* \* \* \*

### Many Persons Concerned

MR. KEATH: I don't suspect any question has bothered more of us than this matter of finding and keeping the right job. It has certainly worried me from time to time, and I am sure each of you listening has spent some anxious moments looking for a job—or a better job.

As a matter of fact, the current issue of *Coronet* presents a searching view of the entire job picture in an article entitled, "Looking for a Better Job?" I think you might find it interesting reading after hearing our *Reviewing Stand* experts discuss this question today. It is just one example of the great interest in the vocational situation taken by our press and radio these days.

Mr. Bartlett, you have shown an interest in the job problem as it affects the young fellow who wants his first job. What are his chances for securing a job now?

MR. BARTLETT: If he were to pass by a State Employment Office and see the

large number waiting there in the morning, he would think the chances were very poor. But there are about 3,000,000 people now unemployed in the country, and there are reports that unemployment might reach 6,000,000 people. We don't know.

I have a feeling, however, that those of us who have jobs are going to hold on to our jobs, and that those who are coming into the labor market now are going to have some difficulty in getting jobs.

MR. KEATH: That certainly affects the high school graduate of whom you were speaking a moment ago, Mr. Busby. Just how would the high school graduate go about investigating his employer?

### Investigating Employers

MR. BUSBY: He should sit down and make a list of the things he is looking for in a job, and then try to determine whether the position he is seeking will provide these things.

MR. KEATH: What are some of the things he might list?

MR. BUSBY: We have asked hundreds of high school graduates the things that they are looking for, and we have been amazed at the sense and maturity of their answers. They are looking for a chance to be of service to society. They are looking for a decent living, security, employee benefits. They are looking for a chance for promotion from within a firm. They all ask the question: Will I be happy in this job? And they don't know the answer to this question.

MR. KEATH: Mr. Endicott, you seem especially interested in how the college graduate fits into this employment picture. What are the prospects for the record number of college graduates you mention?

MR. ENDICOTT: In general, I think I would say the prospects for the well-trained, well-qualified college graduate are good. There has been, however, a distinct leveling-off in employment. We find that our larger companies generally have filled some of the gaps in their organizations, and their needs for new college trained men and women are largely at replacement levels. However, I think we must remember that, due to the postwar expansion of business, these replacement levels are higher than such levels were in a prewar day.

It is also true that a large number of smaller companies that, perhaps, haven't thought too much about the possibility of employing the college graduate are now doing so. We find that they are visiting the placement offices in greater numbers to seek college graduates.

Then, I think there is another point we ought to keep in mind. The average educational level of the employed population has increased over the last few years. For example, I have discovered that there are as many people in college today—roughly 2,500,000—as we had in high school about 25 years ago. In other words, a college degree is almost as common today as a high school diploma was not so many years ago.

### Jobs for the Best

So, I think the better-trained young men and young women are going to have the best chance of getting the job. And, although there is a leveling off—and I am sure that employers will be more selective—I still think the general prospects are reasonably good.

MR. KEATH: Would that line up with your thinking, gentlemen? Can employers be more choosy now? Can they ask for more from prospective employees? Can you ask for more, Mr. Busby?

MR. BUSBY: Yes. We can certainly pick people with the qualifications for the job; not too long ago we couldn't do that.

MR. KEATH: How about suiting the job to the individual? If you are going to pick a person, how do you go about doing it? Let's say, I turn up in your office and want a job. How do you go about finding whether or not I am qualified?

MR. BUSBY: There are ways of predicting whether or not an applicant will be successful and happy in his job. One of these is vocational testing. A lot of people—by submitting to interest tests and temperament and personality tests, mechanical aptitude, manual dexterity, art appreciation tests—can tell whether or not they are suited and are happy in their jobs.

I know one concern that cut the number of its failures from 40 per cent to 10 per cent by vocational testing.

MR. KEATH: Is that a project of the college or of the Veterans Administration, Mr. Endicott? Who does this work?

### Vocational Testing

MR. ENDICOTT: Testing of this kind is done in high schools and in colleges and a very fine job has also been done by the Veterans Administration.

I think I would agree with Mr. Busby regarding the value of these tests, but I think we ought to remind ourselves that the tests are technical instruments. In order to get the best results, they need to be given and interpreted by well-qualified people—which means that the person must have had some special training in the use of these tests.

MR. KEATH: That applies to the one giving the test. What about the fellow taking the test? Can he simply go to the university, or a firm he wants to work for, or to a firm in which he is now employed, or to the Veterans Administration and get these tests?

MR. BARTLETT: If he is a veteran it is possible for him to be tested at one of the 300 guidance centers.

MR. KEATH: At government expense?



MR. BARTLETT: That is free to him at government expense.

And I think the veterans got a little idea of the value of tests during the service. They were all tested, and they came away with the feeling that those who rated well on the tests seemed to get the breaks.

MR. ENDICOTT: An increased number of high schools and colleges are developing testing programs in connection with their vocational guidance programs. Most students in high schools and colleges have a counselor available to them; and chances are that the counselor has had some acquaintance with these tests. The use of these tests, I think, is increasing; their value has been demonstrated.

MR. BUSBY: Quite a number of industrial concerns have their own testing setups. They have trained psychologists who are thoroughly familiar with the tests that are required for the industry involved.

### Let Others Help

MR. KEATH: We have some of the educational requirements for getting a job, too. I have often heard the remark, "You can't know yourself as well as others." How about getting the help of others in sizing you up as an individual—your needs in a job?

MR. BUSBY: Each person needs the help of a trained vocational adviser. And I have found that he can get a lot of help by going to the directors of placement in the various colleges and to the Veterans Administration.

MR. KEATH: We have the applicant at your doorstep, Mr. Endicott. What will you tell him once he has arrived?

MR. ENDICOTT: Of course, our problem from the standpoint of the placement office is to evaluate this young person in terms of the jobs that we have in our files. Unfortunately, the placement director gets this young man much too late from the standpoint of vocational guidance. We ought to see him when he is a freshman or a sophomore in order to help him make

his plans in the light of the job opportunities as we know them.

In fact, it is quite a problem to us to find a person reaching the end of his senior year, coming to our office and asking us to help him find a job when we discover he hasn't done a great deal of this analysis you are talking about or very much planning.

### Grades Important

MR. BUSBY: I want to emphasize the importance of getting good grades in college and in high school. Employers pay a lot of attention to the school record of the people they interview.

MR. KEATH: In other words, the better students have a better chance for getting a job and getting a better job once they have been employed.

MR. BARTLETT: I would like to mention here the advantage of knowing all about occupations. We speak about college graduates; of course, there are a lot of others besides college graduates who are looking for work; there are some 30,000 titles of jobs in the job dictionary. There has recently been published an occupational handbook which describes, I think, 230 occupations in detail as to income from the job, training requirements, etc.

I think we have to be careful in our tests that we don't limit our thinking entirely to the results of tests, because we must also consider experience of the person, what he has done in training, what he has done in his leisure time—all of these must be taken into consideration in pointing to the job.

MR. ENDICOTT: And I would like to add to what Mr. Busby has said about the importance of marks and the importance of the personality of this individual, especially his ability to get along with other people.

For example, the most common question that I am asked as a placement director by the employer is: Do you think this man will fit? And by that I think they mean: Does he have the personal qualities of leadership and ability to work with other people that

will fit him into our organization? So, I think it is a happy combination of the scholastic ability as demonstrated by good solid marks and the personal qualities that represent leadership which are the things that business and industry are looking for today.

MR. BARTLETT: There is another kind of problem. We have had this experience in the employment of the veterans, the advisement of veterans. Not infrequently they present what we call maladjustment problems. They are worried. They don't seem to be getting along in their subjects although everything else seems to point that they should.

MR. KEATH: You are speaking of the student?

### Advising Veterans

MR. BARTLETT: I am speaking of the student or the person who is employed. And, if he can get into the hands of an expert in that field—let's call him a personal adjustment counselor—very often those problems can be straightened out. He can be put on the right track—either a new one or the one he is already on.

MR. BUSBY: There are a number of cases where people in industry have been maladjusted. They haven't fitted into their jobs, and, where they have been turned over to the Veterans Administration, it has done a fine job in straightening out situations of that kind.

I don't think industry faced anything similar to what was expected in orienting veterans. But in the few cases of maladjustment that we have had, the Veterans Administration has helped a lot.

MR. KEATH: I have often heard the statement, "It isn't what you know—but whom you know." What about *pull* in getting a job?

MR. ENDICOTT: I would say offhand that we ought to distinguish rather sharply between asking some friend or relative to use his influence to get us

a job and his telling us about an opportunity that he may learn about.

My answer would be that it is much better for the individual to get his job on his own. In fact, I think a young man frequently is handicapped by being brought into an organization by a relative or friend when he knows that his real success in terms of getting along with his fellow workers—and that is of significance and primarily important—will be on his own.

I would say that it is much better to get your job with your own push than it is with somebody else's pull.

MR. BUSBY: It seems to me that most employers would agree with that 100 per cent. The man should apply for the job himself and not expect somebody else to get it for him.

MR. BARTLETT: The person who is seeking that job should be qualified, and it is not so important how he gets it after that point. It might be called pull—I don't think it is pull—but if he has the makings, and if he has the prestige, and if he has the ability, he can feel free to use almost any channel for getting a job.

### Personal Interviews

MR. KEATH: I think we should drop that hot potato at this point.

What about the personal interview? That is a matter that has concerned me in looking for jobs. I know that individuals want personal interviews. They want to size you up. They want to see whether you might be lying about your qualifications. Mr. Endicott, could you give any advice to a young fellow who would be going in to a firm for such an interview in the weeks to come?

MR. ENDICOTT: Yes, I think he ought to remember that this personal interview is the best opportunity he will have to demonstrate to his prospective employer that he is the kind of person who will fit into the organization.

Chances are the employer can look at the record and find out the job-



seeker's grades and what subjects he has taken, but he can't look at a record and determine what kind of a person he is dealing with. So, the interview is generally for that purpose. Much depends, we have discovered, on how well a person expresses himself, and how he dresses, and how he appeals in a general way to this interviewer.

MR. BUSBY: When he goes into this interview he should be perfectly frank and then ask for an opportunity to see the place where he is going to work and see the people he will be working with. He is much more likely to discover whether he wants that kind of a job or a job with that firm.

MR. KEATH: You speak of going in and looking around the building. What does the employer think of that? Does he think it is a good idea to have himself investigated while he investigates the applicant?

MR. BUSBY: I think, if he is a smart employer, he will want to be investigated; he will want to show the employee the kind of a job he has for him.

MR. ENDICOTT: Not only that, but we have found that, where the employer is hiring a married man, he frequently invites the wife to come down because he knows the wife is an important person.

MR. KEATH: That, then is the personal interview.

I am particularly interested in the training programs given by many organizations. Let's say a fellow starts as a helper of some kind, an apprentice. What are his chances in an individual plant of working up in the organization through something he may learn from the organization or through it?

### Knudsen's Advice

MR. BUSBY: I think the advice of General Knudsen of General Motors is good. He suggests that when a young man comes out of high school he should become a skilled craftsman and use that knowledge as a foundation for a

business. There are a lot of industries that are training craftsmen, and a lot of high school graduates and others have good chances to get training of that kind.

MR. KEATH: In schools of the industry's own setup, is that right?

MR. BUSBY: That's true.

MR. KEATH: I think, then, we have covered some of the things that pertain to this matter of suiting the job to the individual. What are some of the general considerations in choosing a job? What should a fellow be looking for in a business? Should he look to see whether or not the business is growing? How do those factors relate here?

### Plant Ratings

MR. ENDICOTT: Yes, I would say, by all means he should look into the future of the business as best he can judge it. Of course, that is one of the difficult problems. That is one of the reasons, I suppose, why quite a number of college graduates tend to go to the larger and more stable, better-known business concerns. One of their problems is to look into the future, and they usually think that if a company has done well during the past years—good and bad times—that that company will be a stable one.

MR. BARTLETT: Well, what about special benefits? I know of a person who gets a bonus at Christmas of about \$600 each year. This person is only a clerk, but the employees there share in the profits of the plant. I think that is one—you might call it an intangible—one of the benefits. There are a number of those intangibles. Eating in the company cafeteria is an example.

MR. KEATH: A non-profit cafeteria in the organization itself?

MR. BARTLETT: That's right. It seems to me those things ought to be taken into consideration by anyone looking for a job.

How about the ratings of plants?

Where can one get the ratings of a plant? There are credit organizations to which one can go to find out how a business is doing.

MR. BUSBY: I think it is important to know whether the company is progressive, whether it is putting in technological improvements, and whether it is engaged in research. Quite often a small concern that is growing is a better place to work than a larger, more static concern.

MR. KEATH: We have talked about some employee benefits and we have mentioned two of them specifically. What are some of the other things a job applicant might be looking for in a job as an intangible wage beyond his money wage?

### Feeling of Well-Being

MR. ENDICOTT: I think one of the important things is this matter that Mr. Busby mentioned a moment ago. He was talking about high school graduates and their general happiness on the job. I think a man is happiest when he is doing something he is interested in, where he can see that his work amounts to something and make some contribution to the work of the world, perhaps to the benefit of people generally. That is another one of the factors that I think a person ought to consider.

MR. BARTLETT: Along that same line, Mr. Busby, you probably know Thorndyke, the great psychologist, once said: "For a person to have a feeling of well-being he ought to *win* a reasonable number of times."

He was speaking about athletics, etc., but the same thing, I think, applies in the plant. And if the worker finds he is measuring up to the work of the employee to whom he compares himself, he is going to feel good about it.

MR. KEATH: What about the permanence of a position? What about a fellow who is looking for a job where he knows he will have stability. What are the factors in permanence? How

can a man measure permanence? Has anybody ever nailed those factors down sufficiently so that you could give any suggestions on it?

MR. ENDICOTT: That is a hard question because it again ties in with the permanence of the organization, of the company and the product, and of our whole economic system. I think most of us find that we are dependent on the best guess that we can make regarding what is going to happen in the future.

For example, some young men, I think, would do well to consider the aspect of the big broad business world in which they are most interested. Would they be happier on the distribution side, let's say in the sales or the marketing or the advertising side; or would they be better on the mechanical side, where they are engaged in the production; or would they be better over on the record side, where they are dealing with the records and the accounting and the reports? Those are broad general fields of business that a person should consider in determining where he best fits.

MR. KEATH: In other words, the happier you are, the better job you will have, the longer you are likely to last in the job?

MR. ENDICOTT: That's right.

### Choosing Better Jobs

MR. KEATH: I think we should consider choosing a better job now. We have talked a great deal about finding the original job. What are some of the considerations for a fellow who already has a job? Maybe he has been working 10 or 15 years in one job but is unhappy there. How would he go about finding a better job?

MR. BUSBY: It seems to me the first place for a man to look for a better job is right in the organization where he is working. He could look around and pick out some job and try to qualify for it. The best way to qualify for a better job is for him to do the present job the best he knows how and



better than it has been done before.

MR. ENDICOTT: That was the point I was going to make. Before he looks for another job, he had better look carefully at the one he has at the moment and see what he can do to make that one job a better one.

MR. BARTLETT: I agree with these two statements, but I have seen young people who just didn't fit into the organization because of the field of work. Their interests lay in something else.

I am thinking about a young man who was a food salesman. He was earning good money in that place. But he said, "I just didn't feel happy, I just didn't feel I was like the rest of the salesmen." He came to our office and we put him through the works—testing, the interview, etc.; and we found he wasn't qualified for a salesman, but in the field of writing—copywriting, etc.—he was well-qualified. He has made the shift, and he seems to be quite happy. So there may be a number of people who may be better qualified in some other field.

### Industrial Counseling

MR. ENDICOTT: I think that is a good point, Mr. Bartlett. As a matter of fact, business is well aware of the fact that it may have, as you say, a square peg in a round hole. Businessmen are interested in developing personnel counseling programs right in the organization.

That young man you mentioned ought to be able to go to a counselor or a personnel director right in his plant and organization and discover that, instead of being on the advertising side or sales side, he should change over to a job *writing* for that particular company. Mr. Busby, isn't that generally true in the better organized businesses today?

MR. BUSBY: Yes, a lot of companies have personnel counselors who can help people to fit into the best jobs in that organization.

MR. KEATH: In other words, they may start in one job. They can see the

personnel counselor—or where one doesn't exist, their boss—try to work toward the goal of finding the job for which they are best suited, the one in which they will be happiest in their own organization.

MR. ENDICOTT: As a matter of fact, there are a number of companies that are developing what they call training programs. They bring the young college graduate or the high school graduate into these general training programs with the idea of doing just what Mr. Busby has mentioned.

MR. BUSBY: Yes, and a lot of them train people who have not had the advantage of high school and college education, and by self-improvement and training within the industry they have brought along a lot of people who haven't had formal training.

### 'Floaters'

MR. KEATH: Mr. Bartlett, you were talking a bit earlier about not taking a chance of being a square peg in a round hole. What is the danger of a young person coming to that conclusion so often that he is regarded as a floater?

MR. BARTLETT: That is a great danger. I think somebody suggested here that he ought to thoroughly look into all the possibilities before he makes that jump and be pretty sure of the jump before making it, talking it over with various people and taking training within the plant.

The veterans, a large number of them, are taking training in the evenings.

I would like to point out here a statement I saw made by the late Mr. Giannini, the great West Coast banker. He gives this advice: "First, pick a business you love; second, save \$1,000 and invest it in that same business; third, own your own home; and fourth, know what you want to be doing a year from today."

MR. KEATH: I, for one, think your discussion has been of real value to those who may be looking for a job.

Among other things, you have touched on the general employment situation, general considerations in choosing a job—including vocational testing, “pull” in getting a job, the personal interview, training programs

within organizations, and many other points as well.

These and other matters should be carefully considered by all who are looking for a job or a better job.

## Suggested Readings



Compiled by Laura R. Joost, Assistant,  
Reference Department, Deering  
Library, Northwestern University



CAMPBELL, MARY E., ed. *Glamour's Job Scrapbook*. New York, Conde Nast 1949.

Information on a widely diversified group of careers.

ENDICOTT, FRANK S. *Vocational Planning: A Guidebook for Successful Careers*. Scranton, Pa., International Textbook Co., 1948.

“Practical steps to take in analyzing yourself, choosing a vocation, securing the necessary training, finding a job, and succeeding in it.”

FORRESTER, GERTRUDE, ed. *Occupational Pamphlets: an annotated bibliography*, rev. and enl. New York, H. W. Wilson, 1948.

An excellent annotated listing of 2400 pamphlets on vocations.

HAMRIN, SHIRLEY A. *4-Square Planning for Your Career*. Rev. ed. Chicago, Science Research Associates, 1948.

For young men and women who are concerned with the problem of selecting a career.

JONES, EDWARD SAFFORD *Occupations Unlimited*. Buffalo, N.Y., Foster & Stewart, 1948.

For high school and college students, parents, and vocational counselors; a study to help the individual gain steady advancement, make his work more useful and increase interest in the job.

KITSON, H. D. *I Find My Vocation*. 3d ed. New York, McGraw-Hill, 1948.

Explains the steps needed to choose and follow a vocation and the problems that must be solved to succeed in it.

LEEMING, JOSEPH *Jobs that Take You Places*. New York, McKay, 1949.

Show many ways that travel-loving Americans might find to earn a living in foreign lands and the United States territories.

LIEBERS, ARTHUR *Careers in Federal Service for the College-Trained*. Chicago, Wilcox, 1948.

Describes the better paid jobs in the federal civil service and gives information on how to get them.

NEUSCHUTZ, LOUISE M. *A Job for Every Woman*. New York, H. W. Wilson, 1948.

For women interested in self-created jobs.

JONES, LOMBARD *Jobs and Futures; Summer Jobs, 1948*. Reprinted from *Mademoiselle*. 122 East 42nd Street, New York, Strut & Smith Publications, Inc., 1948.

Suggestions for women interested in summer jobs.



U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Occupational Outlook Handbook: Employment Information on Major Occupations*, for use in guidance. (Bulletin No. 940) Washington, D.C., U.S. Supt. of Documents, 1949.

A comprehensive library of occupational information.

U.S. Supt. of Documents. *Occupations, Professions, and Job Descriptions*. Washington, D.C., U.S. Superintendent of Documents, May 1948. (Price list 33A, 1st ed.)

A list of publications on these subjects for sale by the Superintendent of Documents.

*Coronet* 26:37-43, June, '49. "Looking for a Better Job?" ELLIS MICHAEL.

Eight factors to consider before changing jobs and five rules to follow in order to get off to a good start in the new job.

*New Republic* 116:22-4, June 30, '47. "Where Do We Go from Here?" H. WOLFF.

1947 college graduates look over job opportunities.

*New York Times Magazine* p. 36, Oct. 31, '48. "Careers for Young People." L. K. FRANK.

Comment on pamphlets available to help young people choose and fit themselves for a vocation.

*Occupations* 27:263-4, Jan., '49. "Occupational Information Available from Women's Magazines." GERTRUDE FORRESTER.

Where to go for recent periodical information on women's vocational opportunities.

*Scholastic* 53:28+, Oct. 13, '48. "Attorney Hamburger and the Case of the Career Kit." W. FAVEL.

Dramatized note on how high school students can analyze themselves in relation to finding and getting ready for a job.

*Scholastic* 51:3, Sept. 29, '47. "Job for a Lifetime."

Editorial on how to choose a vocation.

*U.S. News* 26:22, April 8, '49. "Help Wanted: Where Jobs Offer Best Bets for Youth."

Brief survey of current job opportunities.

Have you read these Reviewing Stand transcripts?

## **Getting Along with People**

Vol. X, No. 14

## **Let's Look at Business**

Vol. XI, No. 6

## **What Can Adults Learn?**

Vol. XI, No. 8

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*List of all available Reviewing Stand  
discussions on request*

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| 22. How Can We Avoid a Depres-                      |   |

### Volume XII of THE REVIEWING STAND

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| 3. What Is America Reading?                                  | 14. Should We Pass Laws to Curb Communism?                |
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